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ABSTRACT

This program organizes and focuses "peer group attention" upon a 'focus person.' This person has volunteered and has set his personal goals which he hopes to turn into real action with the help of the peer group. A schedule of peer group reinforcement helps to transform his goals into habits. The program can be introduced generally, for class improvement, or specifically to deal with a class or individual problem. In utilizing this program in the classroom, as a counseling tool, or in family situations, the authors suggest the following procedures: (1) the process should begin by gaining cooperation of the students; (2) the teacher or counselor should describe how the program can help one person at a time; and (3) volunteers for participation should then be selected. Specific operational details and procedures based on the above steps are described. (RK)

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A POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT PROGRAM FOR LEARNING GOOD BEHAVIOR

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A POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT PROGRAM

FOR LEARNING GOOD BEHAVIOR

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A POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT PROGRAM

FOR LEARNING GOOD BEHAVIOR

(Formerly known as "POINTING OUT GOOD")

My goal in writing this paper is to simply share what we are doing at Whiteaker with those who would like to know. First of all, I would like to thank the Whiteaker staff for their generous sharing of ideas. I would also like to salute them for their single-minded concern for children.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

This program organizes and focuses "peer group attention" upon a 'focus person.' This person has volunteered and has set his personal goals which he hopes to turn into real action with the peer group's help. A schedule of peer group reinforcement helps to establish his goals as habits. The program can be introduced generally, for class improvement, or specifically to deal with a class or individual problem.

INTRODUCTION

Time and again it is drawn to our attention that our society is largely negatively controlled. Few to no rewards are given for good driving, but if one makes a mistake he usually sweats for a few blocks while he waits for a siren. Doing one's job well is expected, but mistakes that are made sometimes bring the quickest and most terrifying consequences.

Criticism is dished out in such large portions that most all of us will work hard to escape it. "Constructive criticism" has found a place in our vocabulary, but I doubt that many people receive criticism constructively even if it originates constructively from the sender. "I don't like what you are doing," sounds much like, "I don't like you," that the end result of the communication is often the same. In fact the manner in which we address each other often speaks so loud that what we say is either completely

meaningless or almost an opposite to what we are really saying. For instance, a principal might ask a young boy sent to his office, "What seems to be the trouble?" with a threatening manner that really means, "Boy, am I going to make you sorry you ever came to my office." Many of the inquiries we make imply that there is something really wrong with someone.

If our goal is to help people to be the best people they have the capacity to be, then let's ask what is right about a person and try to introduce programs that will help him do what is right, more of the time. With this positive program we will establish our goal, in his mind, by our action. If eliminating misbehavior is seen (by the student) in its proper perspective, we are telling him "Our goal is to help you to be the best kind of person you can be." Incidentally, because so much of your time is spent doing unnecessary or unprofitable things, we want to help you get rid of them so you can have more time to enjoy your interpersonal relationships.

In defining behavior, we believe that a growing child will learn to repeat acts that have caused people to give him attention. Whether our behavior (or our habits of acting) is constructive or destructive depends upon how we have learned to get attention. Assuming that this is the way we learn our behavior patterns, let us look at our program for helping people to be the best kind of people they can be. We don't feel that we have discovered new truth about what happens in human relationships. We just feel that we have found a new way to apply old truth.

We believe we have found a program that expresses its positive ideals with its very first confrontation. Because of its powerful forms of reinforcement, it eliminates many misbehaviors at once, while teaching some important positive habits.

With this paper, I intend to relate some of the programs as we have used them in the elementary school and then to show how to adapt it for use with a family.

CLASSROOM PRESENTATION

Step I: A teacher (or counselor if the teacher desires), begins the process by gaining the cooperation of the students and asking three questions.

1. How many people in this room would like to help someone else be a little bit better than they are? (They usually all want to.)
2. How many people in this room would like to be just a little bit better than they are? (Usually all raise hands, particularly if the "introducer" raises his.)
3. Would you like to know of a way we, as a class, can help one person at a time be better than he is? (Usually they say "yes".)

Step one is important for the following reasons:

A. Often, we find a group of students that is practicing peer group rejection of "outsiders". It seems that in many social groups, people maintain membership partially upon the basis of rejecting those outside the group. This threatens all ; for as long as any are rejected, all are susceptible to rejection! Through the introductory questions, students are led into cooperating with what follows.

B. The general desire for helping someone to be better is recorded in the minds of those in the class.

C. The desire of individuals to become better than they are is generally elicited. As a class and peer group, they are totally behind helping each to be the best person he can be.

D. The teacher can help remind the class of their commitment in this matter of helping and not hurting class members.

Step II: The teacher or counselor describes how the class can help one person at a time.

1. We will choose a focus person from the class, (i.e. someone who wants to be a little bit better than he is).
2. The focus person makes out a list of the good things that he is doing or things he wants to do that would be good. Other students can also volunteer good things that they have seen this person do that are constructive. These can also be added to the list. A miscellaneous category should be left to cover anything spontaneously observed that does not fit into a category.
3. At this time, the question should arise from the student, "What if that person is bad?" (If the question isn't asked, the introducer should ask it.) When the students make suggestions, they should be asked, "Will your suggestion help the focus person understand that you are trying to be of help to him?" Many of the suggestions will make the focus person angry. He may even feel rewarded by people's attention for being bad. The teacher/counselor then should ask, "I wonder what would happen if we didn't pay attention to bad actions?" Sometimes this is such a new idea that no one really would know what would happen. The teacher then might say, "I'll bet that if we didn't see a person do anything bad that he might stop being bad. If that person knows that we don't want to watch him do anything that is not good he might just want to do what we will be watching him for. Let's try

this! If we suspect that he is going to do something bad, we turn our heads completely away from him. Why do we do this? Because, by not paying attention to his misbehavior, we will not be reinforcing or encouraging it. Also he has volunteered to be the focus person because he wants to be better than he is; we have wanted to help him. We know that if we only see the good things he does, he will want to do good things more often.

4. The teacher continues the description of the program by explaining when the time comes to have class focus (the teacher may randomly announce these times, or the class can decide when to have them during this presentation period), the focus person will go to the blackboard or bulletin board where his list has been posted. Class members will point out good things they have seen the focus person do, and he will place a mark behind each good thing that is enumerated. (The student should be allowed to call on people to volunteer information.) The introducer reminds students that our goal is not points...but changed habits. Class focus will be held 5 times on Monday, 4 times on Tuesday, 3 times on Wednesday, 2 times on Thursday and 1 time on Friday. (Each session should be only two minutes long...use a timer to enforce this.)

5. There will also be other programs in connection with this: Self focus and Box Focus. After one has been on class focus for a period of time, in order to change the goals into habits, he will transfer his chart to a small list which he places on his desk. During "Class Focus" times, he scores himself! Also, all former "focus persons" put a goal on a slip of paper with their name on it into "Box Focus" and we'll look at those regularly.

Step III. Picking a focus person and working the program.

1. Volunteers are picked by letting them volunteer. People should not be picked by the teacher because she feels they are in the most need. Usually three or four students are selected and a secret ballot can be cast. Sometimes the counselor has "cheated" a little by selecting the one the teacher wanted, but we have found that the class often knows who should be chosen first. We have also noticed that many misbehaving students do better after they have observed someone else as focus person and also after the class has had the chance to develop the skill of looking for good things in other people. (Sometimes more than one focus person works very well, if competition can be kept on a positive level.)

Four students are picked so that a second person can be held in reserve in case the focus person is absent. When a focus person is absent, the reserve person should assume the role. This way the class gets daily practice. We have found that watching other people for good things is a skill that needs to be developed by nearly everyone.

2. The student selected goes to the board and lists the goals which he wants others to watch him for...these can be good things that he presently does, or things that he wants to do, to improve. The introducer makes sure that it is clear to the focus person that "Class Focus" will start that day, (doing it five times), and decrease each day during the week. This is being done, because if the child can continue to do what he wants to do (with less reinforcement), he is beginning to turn his goals into habits! If he slips and needs more help, make sure that he knows to arrange

with the teacher for more "Class Focus" times. The older a child is, and the longer a habit has been learned, the harder it is to extinguish past behavior. Two weeks may not completely accomplish this in extreme cases.

3. Sometimes a focus person can be helped to keep the "game" honest by knowing this process. If a class member points out something that didn't happen (possibly because he feels badly about not watching the focus person), the focus person perhaps could say, "I appreciate your trying to find good, but I don't feel I deserve your comment." Someone else in the class should say,"I believe that <u>you</u> deserve a point for being honest!"

4. WARNING! We have found the reinforcement to work against, as well as for a person! If a focus person <u>does not receive</u> reinforcement and he <u>is</u> doing well, he feels rejected. If you see that a focus person is not getting reinforcement, you might go around to those that have reinforced him and place a primary reinforcer (e.g. candy) on their desks. If that fails and your verbal reinforcement also fails in getting children to find a focus person's good points, then by all means take the focus person off of "focus." You might explain that the class needs more practice in giving reinforcement. If the class still does not respond to reinforce the focus person, stop using the program! I would suspect that in this case the introducer has not effectively established the goals of helping someone be the best kind of person he can be. If a student does not deserve compliments, let the class silence tell him. If he wants off, let him off.

5. NOTE: In some cases, the problem of selecting goals has caused

a stifling of the program. Students have assumed other's focus charts and said, "I want to work for those same things." This in unfortunate for the class, as well as the focus person. Class members tire of looking for the same things; the focus person may tend to regard this set of goals as not really his own. (Which, in fact, they may not be.) To help a class to know about other goals that they can work towards, we have composed a list of goals that you may want to post in the room or talk over with your class before a "focus person" is chosen. (This list is included as an appendix at the end of this paper.) Ideally, we would like a focus person to state his goal in a positive way, but <u>if he doesn't</u> ....it is more powerful for him to leave his goal the way he stated it!!

KEEPING FOCUS TIMES INTERESTING

To keep the reinforcement sessions interesting, to all concerned, it is necessary to keep learning new, positive things that can be noticed about other people. Perhaps a focus person could start out EACH day by writing a new goal in his chart.

Remember: be as specific as possible in writing goals, so a student can definitely know when he has attained one, e.g., the goal of being "a good student" is a great goal, but how do you know, for certain, when he has attained it? It leaves lots of room for disagreement between focus person and class members. The goal, "I would like to learn my multiplication facts," is one that the "focus person", as well as those who correct his paper, will recognize when he accomplishes it! One guide would be: Make all goals specific, recognizable AND attainable! (Narrow all general goals down to specifics.)

REINFORCEMENT SCHEDULING

Three means of reinforcement are designed into this program.

1. The first means is "Class Focus" reinforcement. Here, the peer group, with the re-directed goal of helping this focus person as much as possible, focuses their attention upon him all day. They record their findings. (Five times on Monday, four times on Tuesday, etc.) If the focus person is able to maintain his goal-directed behavior, he doesn't request a second week of additional reinforcement. Two minutes is recommended for the "Class Focus" procedure. (Use a timer, if possible.) If this set schedule is used, the program should take only 10 minutes per day!

2. The second means of reinforcement is "Self-Focus." After being on "Class Focus," the individual transfers his goals to a sheet of paper or card and tapes them to his desk top. Whenever the second "class focus" volunteer is being complimented, each former focus person scores himself; he then joins in helping the class.

3. The third means of reinforcement is called "Box Focus." A student who has participated in "Class Focus" (and "Self-Focus") writes a goal (or two) that he wants to attain, signs it, reads it to the class, and places it in the "Focus Box" on Monday. On the days when "class focus" times are decreased, (Hopefully, because of the diminishing need for them), the teacher or class president draws a slip out of the "Focus Box." The paper is read and class members who have seen the person working for these goals can tell him about his success. Again, negative behavior IS NOT pointed out. If the person hasn't accomplished his goal,

he sits down after it has been read. Theoretically, "Box Focus" can occur once on Tuesday, twice on Wednesday, etc. An attempt at setting new goals should be encouraged, if a person feels that he has attained his first goals. There is always room for improvement! To keep the possibility of being drawn out of the box high, it is recommended that only ten students be allowed to have their goals in the box at one time.

This random, intermittent reinforcement is very helpful; it helps to strengthen habit formation. If at any time a former focus person feels he needs time on focus, he can write his name on a slip of paper and drop it into the focus box. When he feels he no longer needs this help, he can take it out. Possibly the teacher or class president can go through the names in the box every Monday morning and ask those ex-focus people if they want their slips to remain.

SAMPLE FOUR WEEK PROGRAM:

(Schedule for focus persons; 1 week on Class Focus each)

	FIRST WEEK	SECOND WEEK	THIRD WEEK	FOURTH WEEK
Class Focus	John Doe	Sara Jane	Joe Q. Public	Sally Smith
SELF - FOCUS		John Doe	Sara Jane	Joe Q. Public
BOX FOCUS			John Doe	Sara Jane John Doe

PROBLEM-CENTERED PRESENTATION DIALOGUE SAMPLE

(This approach is used when a problem student is sent to a counselor or Principal.)

"I'm glad you came to me, because it's my job to help you to be the best kind of person you can be."

"First of all, I'd like to ask you how you feel about what has happened?" (Usually, a child will feel angry, sad, hurt, etc.) "You feel this way because

of what has happened. The only way we can keep you from feeling this way again is to do something that will keep it from happening again. Right now, others probably feel badly about what you have done. If we are going to help to keep them also from feeling this way again, we will have to do something to keep this from happening. We can't change what has happened, but we can do something that will help change your habits so that what you do will tend to help others feel good about <u>you</u> AND <u>themselves</u>! Would you like to know how we can do this?" (If the student's answer is 'yes', then proceed to tell him how peer group reinforcement in "class focus" can help him to change. If his answer is 'no', honor that 'no', by saying, "I appreciate your honesty; I also will respect what you want. You are free to return to your class." One very powerful reason for change in a child's life is his freedom to choose what he will and will not do. If that freedom is rejected, and his right to make choices is ignored, his reaction in the long run may be the same disrespect in return. If this student's class is already using the program, the student will quickly know what can happen and probably will not refuse. If the class is not using the program, then a discussion with the teacher about "class focus" in her room, presented in a general class presentation, may bring the student into the program. He may volunteer in the classroom, when he sees others wanting to do it. This has happened, and has proven very successful.)

(If he wants to participate in the program, go back to the classroom together, with teacher's approval...tell the class what 'John' did and how it made him feel.) "'John' has a habit of doing things like this, but he wants to change! He needs the class' help to do it." (Then continue presentation as in the previous section. In this case he will be the focus person.)

HANDLING CONTINUED MISBEHAVIOR

Often, a child is so accustomed to relating to an adult in ways to get the authorities attention for misbehavior that he has little ability to conceptualize (much less, to do) any goals that would get attention for doing good. Needless to say, his beginning attempts may be feeble, at best! If a student has the habit of misbehavior to get the adult's attention, the teacher's "trick" is NOT responding in the same negative manner that his parents, or other significant adults, do! Possibly the threat of sending him to his authoritarian mother is effective for a short time; however, in the long run, it is far better for the teacher to establish herself as an an entirely new adult.

Some children have highly developed habits of getting attention for misbehavior. These children need to expect just and consistent consequences for their behavior. They need to know WHY and for WHAT PURPOSE they are being worked with. Hopefully, this positive program will establish our goal in his mind, (i.e. To help him to be the best kind of a person he can be.)

Two suggestions are made to help this kind of child. 1) Not responding to his misbehavior and 2) quiet room procedure.

Not responding to misbehavior has generally been successful in the classroom if the class knows our goal and is working with us to not reinforce misbehavior. Sometimes if the teacher sees a student reinforcing misbehavior, (perhaps by giggling at Jim), she might ask, "Do you want to help him misbehave?" This question can help a student to understand what he is doing. It is especially effective if the class is working toward helping each person be the best he can be. The teacher could say, "That student wants to get attention for doing good things. We can help him have more time to do good things if we will not pay attention to any bad that he accidentally does."

If serious behavior problems are not getting better, resort to quiet room procedure. When a person is not letting the class concentrate on good behavior (because he is being bad and taking up too much time doing it), then that person should be told that he will have to go into a quiet room whenever he disrupts the class' attention. (This is a place that is as dull as possible, so that his stay will not be interesting. He may also need to complete an assignment while he is out of the classroom.) He should be instructed to stay in this room until a bell or timer rings (time is set for 5 minutes.) If he makes unusual noise or bothers something while there, he should receive 5 more minutes for each disturbance. (Set timer accordingly.) He should be told that when the bell rings, he must stay in the room until he decides he wants to cooperate when he comes out. When he comes back to the classroom, the teacher can acknowledge his decision by commenting: "I'm glad that you really want to help our schoolroom."

Once a teacher decides to use "time-out" or "quiet room" for a certain misbehavior, then she must consistently use it... every time that behavior occurs!

METHODS FOR DETERMINING EFFECTIVENESS OF POINTING-OUT-GOOD

Base line data can be taken on a few behaviors observed in the room, which can be compared to a like study made after instituting the program.

Tattling has been reported to decrease greatly. (Possibly, counting of the number of times students tattle could be effective in determining results of the program).

In some cases teachers have observed that almost complete re-orientation of the self-concept, as they see it, takes place. Possibly, a test could be given to determine changes.

An increase in positive peer group awareness has also been observed. Possibly, a type of sociogram might be used to determine this.

A person's concept of authority figures might be changed by this program. Several teachers have felt they are more positive since their experience with this program.

POSITIVE SKILLS BEING LEARNED

There are three positive skills being taught with this program.

1. The focus person learns the habit of expecting other people to be watching for the good things he does. (This is the opposite for what many in our society expect now.)
2. The children in class are learning the skill of seeing good things that other people do and of showing appreciation by pointing out that good thing.
3. Learning to ignore (or not reinforce) misbehavior.

POSITIVE PROGRAMS THAT CAN BE USED TO IMPLEMENT P.O.G.

1. "Bulletin Board" - Class work display board.
   A. Designate one main bulletin board in your room for the display of class work.

   B. Set the standards for improvement in a teacher-pupil discussion. Example: Neatness, improved grades, number correct.
      a. Make the margin of standards wide enough to really encourage and allow every child to get something up weekly. Different subjects may require different standards.

   C. Everytime you return papers, remind children to keep the display up-to-date. Each child adds daily papers on top of previous ones to save space and to build up a variety of success papers.

   D. As time passes, give reminders to remove old papers and allow for new choices of good work.

   E. Encouraging sayings can highlight the board as decorations, if desired.
      Example: "Positive Papers", "Busy Bees", "Flying High","Best in the West", "Wise Workers".

   F. This is the Children's bulletin board and they administrate it by putting up their best work as standards they made and designated. This helps them put up special work rather than putting

up all papers of any kind.

2. Cards - "PICK-A-CARD"

   A. Each child puts his name lightly in pencil at the top of a large file card.

   B. The cards are shuffled.

   C. Each child picks another child's at random.

   D. He watches the card's owner that day to look for something good.

   E. When he sees this good action, he writes it on the top portion of the card, folds the card over what is written and paper clips it; he puts the owner's name on it and returns it to the box.

   F. It must be stressed that there is good in many things. Example: He read well. She looks well groomed; She smiles at people; He knew his facts today, etc.

   G. A child may go to the box and read only his own card at any time.

   H. A monitor is in charge of passing the cards out each day so that each child will study someone new and look for good points each day.

   I. When the card is filled, the owner keeps it as a record of good things seen in him by others. A new card is started for him and put in the box.

3. BONUS AND BUTTONS

   A. A section of the board is set aside permanently and labeled "Bonus".

   B. Each time a child does something good, noticed by the teacher or class, he is told to "take bonus".

   C. He then puts his name on the board. Here is a moment when the whole class focuses on him and recognizes him for this good act. E.G., "He asked a thoughtful question", "She helped her neighbor"; "His answer really showed thinking"; "He was kind"; "She was so enthusiastic"; "He kept trying until he got the right answer."

   D. After putting his name on the board, he selects a recognition button from the box on the President's desk. Example of sayings: "The Thinker", "Fantastic", "Wonder Worker"; "Helpful" (See Appendix.)

E. The child's name stays on the board all day and he wears the button and returns it before going home at the end of the day.

F. The teacher records the names from the Bonus Board each day. The children know they are earning extra points on their records each time they get "Bonus". This motivates them.

Another teacher used a self-scoring method of watching for good conduct and it was fairly successful. He started with the general program and focused on one person at a time. He then shifted to the same program where the class members score themselves. He found the self-scoring method worked better, possibly because our program teaches the skill of looking for good behavior. After one has learned how to look for good behavior in other people, he is much more able to look for his own good behavior. When the students were told, "Score your own good behavior", they were being told to do something, possibly, they had never done before.

We are continually learning what methods work and which don't work. For instance, we have tried having two focus people in a room at one time, having everyone watch both people. Sometimes this works well and sometimes it does not work well because competition between the two for points becomes quite evident and it can become a popularity contest. We have tried splitting the class into four different groups and having each group watch one person. This was successful but had less peer group power.

SEVERAL OBSERVATIONS ON DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF THE PROGRAM

We have noticed that teachers tend to call for help when they are having a certain behavior problem that particularly bothers them. When the program has been introduced and the behavior returns to an acceptable level, the teacher tends to forget about the program. This is understandable, if the program has been introduced in the teacher's mind as the water for the fire. In one room I simply stated, "I have used this method for several behavior problems and it has worked very well, but I would like to see what it could do if I introduced it in a room that wasn't having any particular behavior problems. Maybe we can use the program to help people develop positive characteristics, such as trustworthiness, dependability, courtesy, etc.

We have found that <u>consistently</u> applying and reinforcing the program is what is needed to make it most effective. Where it is forgotten, its power

to focus attention upon building good habits is lost.

With this program, four things must be continually stressed.

1. We are watching for good things, and reinforcing them.
2. We are not watching misbehavior.
3. We are being as sincere in helping the focus person as we can be. It is not the number of compliments a person gets that counts; it is the honesty involved.
4. No person must be chosen by the teacher or student to be "fixed" by this program. Each focus person must volunteer! This program works best when the class establishes their goal and works towards it.

HIGH SCHOOL APPLICATION?

One person had a beginning band. He decided that he would try "pointing - out-good"with them. His method of introduction was: "Say kids, I need to know when I am really being effective in helping you to be better players. What I want you to do is to let me know when I say something, or do something that helps you play better. Tell me during a break, or drop a note on my desk when you've noticed something I have done." (No mention of not paying attention to any faults was made at first. When he does deal with faults that are mentioned, perhaps he might say, "You know I appreciate your telling me this, because I know that you are really intending to help me. Sometimes though a person can get so involved with feeling bad about something he has done wrong that he isn't able to really work on the good things that he knows that he can improve on. I would really rather that you pointed out the good things that I do and overlook the mistakes, because I feel that you can help me improve the fastest in this way.") After a few days or a week he asked them

if they would like to "try it". Those that did were selected as focus persons by each section; to listen for specific things like tone quality improvement, entrances, finishes, whatever is needed. When they have listened to their own focus person in their own section for a while, they might trade focus persons for entire sections. I.E. the drum section listen to the brass section, and maybe the flutes listen to the blending of the clarinets. In theory this process should work best of all in a band, because the total effort of the group is so readily discernable at all times. Everyone knows what everyone else is doing, if they are listening and trying to improve. Listening should be increased by this program. The desire to improve might be influenced by the success they have in listening to each other.

ENJOYABLE FAMILY RELATIONS

FIRST MEETING WITH FAMILY (All members present)

Counselor - "If we could show you a way to help each other enjoy being together more, would you be interested?"

Parents - "Show us."

Counselor - "There is one important thing about helping each other that we must remember. It is a commonly established principle of learning, as well as plain common sense, that a person will learn to do more of whatever we pay attention to him for doing. If you want a person to be bad, watch when he does bad things. If you want to encourage a person to do good, watch him when he does good.

INTRODUCTION OF THE POSITIVE PROGRAM

It is our intention to help you enjoy being together by helping you to put this rule into practice. We do this by choosing a focus person and helping him make a list of things that he can do to contribute to good family relations. Then, anytime during the day that someone else in the family sees that person doing one of these things on the list, he says, "I believe that you deserve a point for the thing you have done. That evening the family gets together and each person that has given a point tells the rest of the family why he gave it.

The purpose of points is not to make a huge number of them, but to help that person realize that he is doing many good things.

Usually the person that is being helped continues to be the focus person until he feels that he is really being a better person. When he feels that the family has helped him enough, so that he will continue being a better person, then he should tell the family about it in a night meeting. When that

happens the family does two things:

First, they celebrate! Why? Because they have effectively helped someone to be a better person. They have a real reason to be happy and to celebrate. Secondly, they choose another person that would like to be helped to be a better person. This may continue until the whole family has had a turn. When the whole family feels they have been helped to be better, then that is a big reason they should celebrate. Some big thing should be done that they all really want to do.

POSITIVE ATTENTION

Before we go on, there is something that we need to talk about. What should happen if the person that we are watching does something bad? What should we do? Is our solution one that will help the person be better? We could spank that person, but would that make him feel good about us or help him want to be better? It might make him afraid of us and then we would have taught him that he should fear us and not do bad things. On the other hand, he might say, "When I do bad things they really pay attention to me." We will have taught him that misbehaving really pays off. If we give him our attention for being bad, he may learn that this is the easiest way to get our attention. That is the last thing that we want any person to learn! The person shouldn't be good because he is afraid. In this case, the person we will be watching wants to be good. We also want to help him be good, so let's only give him attention when he is good. When he is misbehaving, let's not even look at him. In fact, if we think that he is going to do anything bad, let's get up and walk away from him. (Next week, we might have something more to say about this. But for now, let's only pay attention to good behavior and ignore all the bad. Handling continued misbehavior is discussed later.)

STARTING THE "FOCUS" PROGRAM

Let's take this big chart and write the focus person's name on the top line. Now, let's start listing all the things you would like to have other people watch you for doing. If anyone in the family knows of something this person does that makes living in this family more enjoyable, let's put that down also. Sometimes other people see us do constructive things of which we aren't aware.

Here is a list of things you might like to choose from:

Getting up on the first call
Coming to meals on time
Asking permission when I should
Giving Compliments
Helping others
Making the bed well
Keeping the room neat
Dressing neatly, (shoes polished)
Being trustworthy
Helping prepare meals
Doing something without being asked
Being courteous
Doing my Studies
Getting along well
Doing the dishes well
Smiling, laughing, being cheerful
Playing cooperatively
Miscellaneous

SCORING

We score this person's "good" points by putting up a mark on his chart when we see this person has done something good. If a family is having problems not remembering to find good things that the focus person is doing, they might put a jar by the "good things chart" with some pennies, jelly beans, or or trinkets in it and let each person choose what he wants after he has given a sincere and honest compliment and scored it on the chart.

It might be a good idea to let both the focus person and the one who pointed out his good behavior have a treat, so both of them know how much the family

really appreciates how they are learning to become better persons. A penny that can be "put in my piggy bank" should prove to be more successful in the long run. Pennies represent buying power for many things a person wants. On the other hand, we don't want children to be dishonest in order to get pennies, so we might tell the family that each point they give should be initiated by them. That evening each person can tell the rest of the family what he saw the focus person do for the point.

Another thing that should be remembered about the evening meeting is that the focus person should have a chance to tell the family the good things he has done that no one noticed. This will help other family members know what to look for, as well as help them to "point out good things" with more skill. This also helps the focus person continue looking for things that are new and are good for him to do.

If you find only a few pennies are being used each day, you might try using nickels. This will make the rewards of looking for good things higher and may add new interest to the process.

SELF-SCORING

When a person stops being the focus person, he should take his chart down and use it to score himself every day. He can then keep his chart to score his own points and record these points on his behavior graph. In this way, he can keep a record of how well he continues being the person the family has helped him to become. When it comes time for the whole family to celebrate, after having helped each member, then he will have a record which says he has continued being good.

CELEBRATING

Now focus person! How would you like the family to celebrate when you

find yourself being the type of person you want to be?

Some possible suggestions: Have an evening together, making popcorn or popcorn balls; playing games; going to a show; going to an ice cream store and getting a treat; working on a hobby; watching a favorite TV show together.

We want to remember to save a very special treat for the whole family when they have had their chance to be focus people.

FOLLOW UP PROGRAMS

We have not used this process long enough to have developed enough programs to follow after the whole family has had a chance to be focus people. Some of the ideas below might be tried out.

1. The family might try another round of letting each member be "on focus" for a week or as long as he feels he is finding new things that he wants the family to look for.
2. The family might let each member be a focus person one day at a time.
3. The family might pair off and let one of the pair watch the other for a while and then have the other one watch him.
4. Each member of the family might watch all of the other members of the family and each day write one compliment on a slip of paper, with that person's name on it, and drop it in a hat. Each member of the family will start the next day at breakfast by reading a compliment about a good thing that he has done.
5. Let each person decide that he is going to try especially hard to do a certain good thing that day. Let each person write down that good thing on a sheet of paper. That evening let each member have the others guess what it was he was trying especially hard to do.
6. Let each person do a "secret" kind deed for some other member of the

family and then tell about it that night.

7. Let each person see how many good things that he can find other people doing and compliment them for it.

8. Using a wrist counter, let one member of the family count all of the compliments or good things said or done by any member of the family in the evening or a week-end day. Graph the number, and when it has been proven that the family has improved, celebrate.

HANDLING CONTINUED MISBEHAVIOR IN THE FAMILY

If serious behavior problems are not getting better, try this: When a person is not letting the family concentrate on good behavior because he is being bad and taking up too much time doing it, then that person should be told that he will have to go into a quiet room whenever he disrupts the attention of the family. This is a room that is as dull as possible so that his stay will not be interesting. He should be instructed to stay in this room until a bell or timer rings (time is set for 3 to 5 minutes.) If he makes unusual noise or bothers something while in the quiet room, then he should receive 5 more minutes for each disturbance and the timer should be set accordingly, without parental comments. He should be told that when the bell rings, he must stay in the quiet room until he decides he wants to cooperate when he comes out. When he comes out from the room, the whole family can then approve of his decision by commenting: "I'm glad that you really want to help our family", or "I'm glad that you really want to try to act more like the person you really are."

Once a mother decides to use "time-out" or quiet room for a certain misbehavior, then she must use time-out every time that behavior occurs. As soon as the behavior has occurred: Mother tells him 1) he can either go to

the quiet room or he will be taken; 2) That he must wait 3 to 5 minutes; 3) Before he comes out, he must decide he wants to help the family enjoy being together more by cooperating. When he does come out, the family can tell him how glad they are that he is really trying to help people.

THE RUDIMENT METHOD

One family found that when they put one person on focus that the other children were so envious that their behavior got worse. They decided that they would have <u>all</u> the family be focus. After supper when the whole family was together they had a time of sharing the good things that had been seen by others. Each person that had been recognized for doing something good would receive a gold star for that day. Reinforcement for having a full week of gold stars was figured out for each person. They also ignored tattling, which they feel has also helped their relationships.

THE STRUGGLE OF IDEALS

When reading about P.O.G. some have wondered what would happen if the focus person gave the group a list of bad things to look for. This has never happened. Each person knows what is good and bad according to the rules of the group to which he belongs. Ideals seldom change, possibly because they are so seldom attained. If this program helps one to reach his first goals, then maybe this success gives him the maturity to set higher goals

GOALS REALIZED?

One focus person was at the blackboard receiving compliments and a little girl who does not often have a new nor clean dress on gave him a compliment. Spontaneously he said to her, "Your dress is beautiful today". The teacher got the picture of a person so full of gratefulness for receiving other people's positive attention that his gratefulness spilled over and spontaneously and

naturally found good in others. To me, this is the greatest goal of the educational process: to make a person so full of good feeling about himself that he spontaneously shares his wealth.

APPENDIX

Button machines and buttons can be ordered from the "MAD FAD BUTTON MAKING MACHINE" Pressman Toy Corporation 11-43rd. Street, Brooklyn, New York. The machines plus 30 buttons are sold for $13.00. Extra buttons can be ordered. They are 10¢ for buttons 1½" in diameter. Larger buttons are available.

GOOD SLOGANS FOR BUTTONS

TREMENDOUS	UNSURPASSED	MOST FRIENDLY
QUIET	SUPERIOR	POSITIVE THINKER
UNIQUE	WHIZ	THE THINKER
EXTRA SPECIAL	GOOD LISTNER	FANTASTIC
GREATNESS ITSELF	NICE MANNERS	TOO MUCH
I SIT TALL	GREAT	BETTER WRITING
WOW!	CALCULATOR	GOOD HELPER
UNBELIEVABLE	IMPROVED BEHAVIOR	NEAT
VERY GOOD	MOST IMPROVED PERSON	INCREDIBLE
CAREFUL PERSON	GOOD SPORT	TEACHERS PET
PEOPLE TO PEOPLE PERSON	BOOK WORM	MOST POLITE
SUPER SERVICE	BUSY BEE	IN THE GROOVE
MOST IMPROVED BEHAVIOR	SMILING FACE	I DOOD IT
FIRST IN LINE FOR LUNCH (BOY & GIRL)		

In general, names that are chosen by a class are the best to put on the button faces.

APPENDIX

SAMPLE GOALS

IMPROVEMENT IN PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES

I want to show I'm concerned about hygiene (for example, by keeping my teeth clean; eating all of the hot lunch meal, for a balanced diet; etc.)

I want to improve in using tasteful make-up.

I want to be more strict about cleanliness (Name specifics: such as, fingernails, hair, shoes, etc.)

I want to be dressed at my best (for example, good taste in selection of clothes, color-coordination of outfit, well-pressed, clean clothes, etc.)

I want to work on improving my posture!

PERSONAL IMPROVEMENT

I want to be more willing to try a difficult task.

I want to listen courteously when others are sharing.

I want to have an 'I can do it' attitude.

I want to react to situations with a happy demeanor! (Let my face show my HAPPY inner feelings!!)

I want to take turns during group games, cheerfully!

I want to spontaneously <u>compliment</u> other people.

I want to respect other's property.

I want to include others that are sometimes left out of games or class discussions.

I want to learn something new about another student each day, so I can be more interested in others.

IMPROVEMENT IN STUDENT DEPENDABILITY

I want to remember to have my pencil sharpened daily before class.

I want to be in my seat when the bell rings.

APPENDIX

I want to raise my hand before talking.

I want to listen carefully to another's story, problem, etc.

I want to help other students...e.g. by letting my desk partner have quiet, and not disturbing his work; by meeting another student at the door and helping him hang up his coat; by sharpening another's pencil; by being quiet during a film so others may benefit; by admiring other's projects without touching; by being prompt; by playing fair at recess; by being attentive; by being interested in their ideas....

I want to learn my spelling list.

I want to read a book quietly when I've finished my assignments.

BEING A GOOD CITIZEN

I want to cooperate with the teacher by respecting what she wants me to do.

I want to be polite when eating in the lunch room.

I want to share things I have to share.

...show appreciation to 'unthanked' persons around school, (e.g. lunch-room cooks, janitor, secretary, etc.)

...show concern for other people's conditions: sickness, happiness, sorrow, joy.

...be willing to forgive and forget other's mistakes.

...run errands for other people, voluntarily.

...to work on proper playground conduct.

...to develop positive habits...such as, friendliness, kindness, cheerfulness, trustworthiness, and helpfulness.

...to practice complimenting others.

Remember, these are merely sample goals. Many more can be named by each individual student!